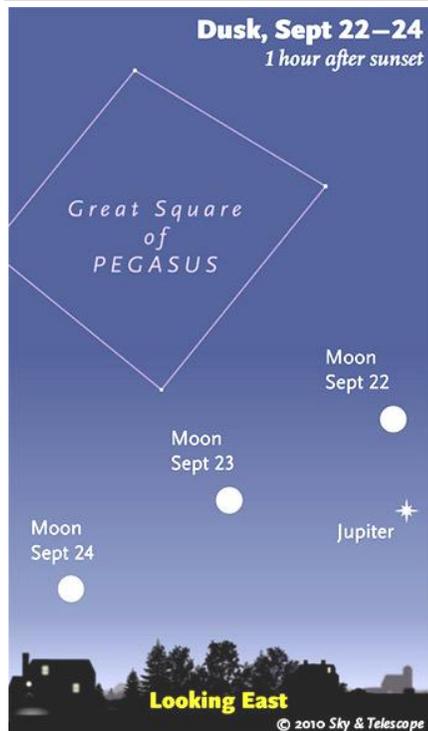


This Week's Sky at a Glance

Some daily events in the changing sky for September 17 – 25.

by Alan M. MacRobert



Watch the Moon at opposition pass Jupiter close to opposition. Before the 22nd, Jupiter will be there but not the Moon.

Sky & Telescope Magazine

Friday, Sept. 17

- Uranus is passing 0.8° north of Jupiter tonight and tomorrow night. Although Uranus is easily visible in binoculars at magnitude 5.7, Jupiter outshines it by nearly 3,000 times at magnitude -2.9 . In fact, Uranus appears roughly as bright as one of Jupiter's four Galilean moons.

Saturday, Sept. 18

- You know summer is near its end: as the stars come out, Cassiopeia in the northeast is already as high as Big Dipper in the northwest!
- Jupiter's Great Red Spot should cross Jupiter's central meridian (the imaginary line down the center of the planet's disk from pole to pole) around 11:05 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The "red" spot appears very pale orange-tan. It should be visible for about an hour before and after in a good 4-inch telescope if the atmospheric seeing is sharp and steady. A light blue or green filter helps. (The Red Spot transits about every 9 hours 56 minutes; for all of the Red Spot's central-meridian crossing times, good worldwide, use our Red Spot calculator or our list for the rest of this observing season.)

Sunday, Sept. 19

- Mira, the prototype red long-period variable star in Cetus, has been visible to the unaided eye for a couple weeks now; it's on its way up to a maximum predicted for mid-October. Cetus is in good view in the east-southeast by about 11 or midnight daylight saving time. See the comparison-star chart in the September *Sky & Telescope*, page 58.

Monday, Sept. 20

- Jupiter's Great Red Spot should transit tonight around 12:43 a.m. EDT; 9:43 p.m. PDT.

Tuesday, Sept. 21

- The dim little constellation Scutum, high in the south after dark, lies in one of the richest parts of the Milky Way. It sports not only the famous open star cluster M11, but the nice globular cluster NGC 6712, the big, dim planetary nebula IC 1295 — and the tiny planetary nebula Kohoutek 4-8 in the same high-power view. Get out your OIII filter, and see Ken Hewitt-White's "Going Deep" article and chart in the September *Sky & Telescope*, page 64.

Wednesday, Sept. 22

- This evening Jupiter (and Uranus) are below the full Harvest Moon, as shown above. The Moon is exactly full at 5:17 a.m. Thursday morning EDT.
- Autumn begins in the Northern Hemisphere, and spring in the Southern Hemisphere, at 11:09 p.m. EDT. This equinox marks when the Sun crosses the equator heading south for the year. Day and night (if you include twilight as night) are about equally long.

Thursday, Sept. 23

- Jupiter and Uranus are now left of the Moon during evening, as shown above.
- Jupiter's Great Red Spot should transit around 10:12 p.m. EDT.

Friday, Sept. 24

- This is the time of year when, after nightfall, the dim Little Dipper (you'll need a dark sky) is dumping water into the bowl of the Big Dipper far below it. Bailing out for fall?

Saturday, Sept. 25

- Jupiter's Great Red Spot should transit around 11:50 p.m. EDT.